fat pieces of meat is a constantly relished dream, even though rarely realized. On the other hand, the provisions haphazardly collected are considered—and really are—the daily misery. In Nambikwara folklore, the expression "to eat grasshoppers" (tagare urrige, bl), a typically feminine and infantile harvest, is nearly equivalent to the French "to eat the mad cow" (to rough it). At the same time the woman is considered a tender and good being, but of the second order. The language which she uses habitually separates her from the men and unites her with the children (in the same way that she collaborates with the children in expeditions of collecting and gleaning). We shall see later that this assimilation also continues into the metaphysical thinking and that, on this latter plan, discrimination between the sexes attains proportions whose psychological attitudes are only a derisive indication. It is considered well-bred for men to speak of women with a pitying good will, and, in conversations between the two sexes, to address them with a slightly mocking indulgence. Certain sayings are heard often among men speaking among themselves:

5. urtnoũnatukine ioõotnuũutnãdniani denesunatukine. (bl)
The children do not know, I know, the women do not know.

and they being up the group of women (dosu, al), their jokes, their conversations, with a tone of tenderness and mockery. But, of course, that is only [57] a social attitude. When the man finds himself alone with his wife around the camp fire, he listens to her complaints, considers her demands attentively, asks her help in a hundred undertakings. The male line of talk disappears, and gives way to the collaboration of two partners conscious of the essential value which they have for one another.

This ambiguity of male attitude as regards women has its exact correspondence in the equally ambivalent behavior of the female group. The women think of themselves collectively, and manifest it in several ways. In the first place they do not talk like the men. Even though a sexual language does not exist in the true sense of the word, in conversation a thousand inflections, shades of pronunciation are found which are typically feminine. Women articulate badly and affect a sort of jabbering which is reminiscent of infants' pronunciation. They whisper instead of talking out loud, and emit sout ih with an affected mannerism and preciosity which are at times seductive when they are not exasperating. Thus, in dialect al, they give words an ending -ũ instead of the usual -su or -tu. They also pronounce -kititu, the verbal suffix which is for men, -kedjutu or -kedjusu.

[734] wife. We have already cited the case of the two little girls
593 a8 and a9 whose stepmother (a7) refuses to take care of them.
Their father (A6) must, then, assume many of the lesser func-
[542] tions. At the time of departure for a trip, it is he who prepares
the basket for the elder, measures on her the length of the tump
line, and shortens it thanks to the free end which he fastens
passing it several times through the holes of the basket-work.
869 It is also the father who tells the children the traditional stories.
● 538 And, with a view to shortening and making more intelligible
these often long and repetitious accounts, he applies himself
to transposing them in a style especially adapted for children.
Thus, the infant's version of the story of the Flood (1) is as

1. See below, p. 120, the complete version of this story.

follows:

15. ɰãitento dohonenẽiram kãnaram hẽpatnẽ atãtene
ɰeidenkiathattene ɰafudɔnle. (b1)
Everyone was dead! There was no one left! Not a man!
Everyone was dead! Nothing more!

595 Relationships of a particular nature exist in the case of
571 polygamous marriage between the children of the first wife and
their young stepmothers. Even though the latter are called
"mother" or of "sister of the mother" by them, they live in a
state of companionship with them, especially with the girls,
which also extends to all the children of the group. We have
already dwelled on this society of girls and young wives who
take collective baths, go to defecate in a group, smoke to-
gether, joke and give themselves over to rather farfetched games,
such as spitting long jets of saliva in one another's face. An-
other example: a3 and a4 play with their stepdaughter a5. One
of them pushes her and throws her to the ground with such
violence that her head cracks against the ground and the little
one begins to shriek. The two young women heap mockeries
upon her. Finally, the youngest goes to drag her from the
ground almost by force and pushes her toward her mother, with-
out ceremony, like a package. These relationships are close,
appreciated, but without courtesy, like those which young boys
might have in our society. They rarely imply service or atten-
tion. Thus, A1 and his polygamous wives a3 and a4 divide a

In older versions, the old women (since the old women share the magic powers of the men among the Nambikwara as also in other tribes) (4) was undoubtedly not content with measuring the

4. Cf. above, p. 101.

fall of water by the duration of the fall of her nuts, she actually provoked it by throwing them. Whatever the case may be, "magical projection" is probably found at the origin of the theme of the throwing of small fruits or grains in South American folklore.

[122] PSYCHOLOGICAL ATTITUDES

The Nambikwara offer the observer a very special psychological and moral aspect, and one which we have not found again either among their immediate neighbors--Paresni, tribes of Guaporé, and Tupi of the Gi-Parana--or among other South American tribes. It is worth an attempt to separate its principal characteristics. Few of the primitive South Americans display so much spontaneity and freedom in their behavior. Few manifest such ease in psychological relationships, and such grace of expression. Thus, in their relationships with the ethnologist, the informants introduce formulae which constitute true sociological inventions in order to respond to a new situation, on the part of individuals who do not use either a formula of greeting or of leave-taking in their own social relationships:

60. tai undejwenjẽ ta eikiredenjẽ nã̃ jiren undenjẽ tatjene nã̃ kitjani. (b1)
I am going to sleep, I am going away, you go to sleep, I will stay, you go away.

Or to put an end to an interrogation of which they are weary:

61. iejiana amenenjẽ hikwaripna iatjene amdenjẽ kanahitan jedenjẽ. (b1)
This is useless, it must be left; one does not see clearly any more, this is useless, let us leave it; tomorrow we will talk.

Or again:

62. nakanajẽnjani nihin nalitjani. (b1)
I have forgotten, wait till I remember.

Their daily life is full of exuberance. It is not only in the games of ball that one hears joyous exclamations: